

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 remain pending after amendment.

Claim Amendments

Various editorial amendments are made in claim 4. Support for the tack limitation of claim 2 resides at page 30, line 15. New claims 20-23 are added. Support for claim 20 resides at page 19, lines 15-22 of the specification. Support for claim 21 resides at page 19, lines 15-22 of the specification. Support for claims 22 and 23 resides at page 19, line 23 to page 21, line 17, and page 22, lines 18-22. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Restriction Requirement

Applicants acknowledge the prior restriction requirement of the Examiner, in response to which applicants elected the invention of claims 1-9 and 16-18, as well as species B.

Objection to Abstract of the Disclosure

In response to the Examiner's objection to the Abstract, a new Abstract of the Disclosure is submitted herewith, and entry of same is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 USC 112 (paragraph one)

Claims 2-4, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 (paragraph one) as being based on a disclosure which is not enabling. This rejection respectfully is traversed.

The Examiner believes claim 2 is not enabled in the absence of any specific recitation of the types of adhesives employed. In response, the claim sufficiently identifies applicable pressure sensitive adhesives without identifying each type of adhesive. For instance, suitable adhesives are stated to have specific absorption and tack values. One of ordinary skill in the art can readily determine the identity of applicable adhesives which may be used with success in applicants' invention.

Indeed, the properties of the pressure sensitive adhesive layer of claims 2 and 3 can be controlled by appropriately selecting, for example, the types and proportions of the respective monomers, the type and proportion of the crosslinking agent, glass transition temperature, and average molecular weight of the adhesive layer, the thickness of the adhesive layer, and the types and amounts of additives that may be present, as shown at page 30, lines 16-25 and page 31, lines 14-23 of the specification. One of ordinary skill in the art can

readily carry out the claimed invention in view of such disclosure.

In view of the above, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 USC 112 (paragraph two)

Claims 2-4, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 (paragraph two) as not distinctly claiming the invention. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, claim 4 is amended to address the issue raised by the Examiner. The objection to claim 8 is believed to be without basis, as it does not depend from a multidependent claim.

The Examiner believes claim 2 is indefinite in the absence of any specific recitation of the types of adhesives employed. In response, claim 2 sufficiently identifies applicable pressure sensitive adhesives without identifying each type of adhesive. For instance, suitable adhesives are stated to have specific absorption and tack values. One of ordinary skill in the art can readily determine the identity of applicable adhesives which may be used with success in applicants' invention.

In view of the above, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 USC 103(a) over Admitted Prior Art

Claims 2-4, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicants' admitted prior art. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

The Examiner relies on the "admitted prior art" as support for his view that the claimed invention is obvious. Such prior art is believed to be comprised of JP 3-74893, JP 6-297681, and JP 590114055. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

JP 3-74893 teaches that it is appropriate that a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer has a tack (adhesive strength) of from 100 to 300 g/25-mm. However, even though such pressure sensitive adhesive layers exhibit such properties, the solvent absorption, tack after absorption, and other properties identified in claims 2 and 3 are dependent, in part, on the types and proportions of the monomers present, the type and amount of the crosslinking agent, the glass transition temperature, and the average molecular weight of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer and incorporated additives. Such properties are not inherent in a pressure sensitive adhesive

sheet having the tack disclosed in the reference. The initial strength, and solvent absorption or tack after absorption are not correlated. This is apparent from applicants' examples and comparative examples.

With respect to the asserted obviousness of the claimed invention, none of the cited references take any notice of or give any consideration to the properties of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer relative to the solvent present in inks. The references also fail to disclose or suggest the importance of the absorption amount of solvent included in inks, and the tack after solvent absorption. Accordingly, even if one attempts to remove inks from the article to be cleaned, one of ordinary skill in the art is provided no direction from the cited references.

The claimed invention is thus neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references (applicants' admitted prior art). The rejection should be withdrawn.

The application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact James

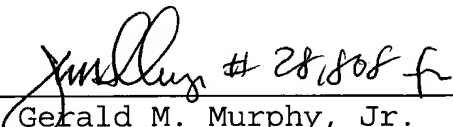
W. Hellwege (Reg. No. 28,808) at (703) 205-8000 to discuss such matters.

Applicant respectfully petitions under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) and 1.17 for a three-month extension of time in which to respond to the Examiner's Official Action. The Extension of Time fee in the amount of \$930.00 is attached hereto.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Very truly yours,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By  # 28,808 f
Gerald M. Murphy, Jr.
Registration No. 28,977
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

GMM/JWH

CLAIM AMENDMENTS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

Amend the claims as follows:

2. (Amended) A pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for removal of a solvent-containing substance, the sheet comprising a substrate and a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, excluding a foaming pressure sensitive adhesive layer, formed at least on one side of the substrate, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer absorbs 5 g/m² or more of a solvent contained in the substance to be removed when the pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet is immersed in the solvent for 1 second, and wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet after absorbing 5g/m² of the solvent has a tackiness of [1] 3 cN/25-nm or more as determined by a method in conformity with Japanese Industrial Standards (JIS) Z 0237.

4. (Amended) The pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for removal of a solvent-containing substance according to claim 3, wherein [a pressure-sensitive adhesive constituting the] said pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is comprised of a pressure-sensitive adhesive comprised solely of [comprises such]

components [alone] that are insoluble in a solvent [contained]
present in the substance to be removed.